



The Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic Schools



St Elphege's RC Infant School Admissions Policy 2026-2027

Scope:		St Elphege's Infant School	
This Review:		Autumn Term 2026	Annually
Next Review:		Autumn Term 2027	
Approved	EHT:		Full Governing Body
	Governor:	T Tamplin	

St Elphege's RC Schools

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The Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic Schools



'With God all things are possible'

'Where there is love, there is God'

With the help of God's love, the Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic Schools will seek to develop the whole child. Each child is uniquely created and precious to God and it is the Federation's mission, guided by the Holy Spirit, to nurture each child's spiritual, moral and academic growth.

Inspired by the teachings of Christ we will...

- Develop our children's faith, spirituality and joy in the love of God
- Educate our children to the highest standards thus realising their own potential
- Instil in our children the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed and take pride in their achievements recognising we each have special gifts and talents
- Encourage everyone to be more than they thought possible, in a secure and loving environment
- Promote a caring community where we will all behave well. We will be dignified in our actions, demonstrating good manners, tolerance, kindness and generosity to ourselves and others
- Prepare our children today to become tomorrow's responsible and independent individuals equipped to face life's challenges
- Ensure our Federation is a happy, safe and welcoming place where we all enjoy learning, work hard, support one another and do our best
- Create an active partnership of love, joy and high expectations between children, parents, carers, staff, governors, parishes and the wider community

Inclusion statement

The school community will ensure that ALL children irrespective of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender (including those who identify as transgender), sexual orientation, ability, special educational need, disability, faith or religion, age, culture, socio-economic or home background will have equal access to the breadth of our curriculum.

The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter and the school will endeavour to promote their individuality. Children with learning disabilities and gifted and talented children will be allowed to express themselves according to their ability. Work will be adapted to meet their needs and achievements will be celebrated.

St Elphege's Schools in Context

St Elphege's RC Infant School is a Voluntary Aided School which is part of The Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic Schools. The schools are part of the Archdiocese of Southwark.

The Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic schools were founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for Catholic children. The school is conducted by its governing board as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its Instrument of Government and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. The Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic schools will give every child the best possible education because each individual is uniquely created and precious to God. As a Catholic community, guided by the Holy Spirit we will follow the example of Jesus Christ in all aspects of daily life.

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 of St Elphege's RC Infant School have a capacity of 90 children per year group, and 30 children per class.

Pupils are admitted to the Foundation Stage (Reception class) in September when the child attains the age of 4 years on or before the 31st August, preceding the date of entry. Admissions, to other year groups can take place in September or during an academic year.

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the governors intend to admit into the reception class, in September 2026, up to 90 pupils, the published admission number (PAN), without reference to ability or aptitude.

Ethos of the School

As a Catholic School we aim to provide a Catholic Education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeates every aspect of the school's activity. The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. However, the Governing Board also welcomes applications from those of other denominations and faiths and from those who have no faith whom support the religious ethos of the school. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is fully supported by all the families in the school. We ask all those with parental responsibility applying for a place at the school to understand and respect the Catholic ethos and its importance to the school community.

Oversubscription

Where the number of applications exceeds 90 per year group, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated below:

1. Looked after Catholic children and all previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
2. Baptised Catholic children. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must be provided.

3. Looked after children and all previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
4. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
5. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
6. Children who are members of other faiths, Churches and denominations. Evidence of Baptism/dedication or evidence of membership required.
7. Any other children.

The following order of priorities will be applied when applications within any of the above categories exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications.

- I. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. The governors will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's published admissions number.
- II. Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided, at the time of application, by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
- III. Proximity to the school of the child's home address*, the distance measured in a straight line from the school entrance by the local authority using a geographical computerised information system. Evidence of residence may be required. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school, the place will be decided by the drawing of lots.

All school admission applications for school places are subject to address checks to ensure school places are allocated fairly and in accordance with published admission arrangements.

These checks will be conducted by the home Local Authority; where a fraudulent address or an address of convenience are found to have been used, the application and any subsequent offer may be withdrawn.

Applicants living outside of England may only submit an application if they have a linked address within the Local Authority area, and documentary evidence must be supplied to show they will return to the address prior to the September in the year of entry; this address must not be an address of convenience.

**The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child's residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received and the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be determined to be the address where the child is registered with the doctor. However, all evidence will be taken into account. If the residence is not split equally between both parents, then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week.*

Notes:

- a) A “brother or sister” means children who live as brother and sister, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives (e.g. cousins). Archdiocese of Southwark - Guidance on School Admissions Revised May 2023
- b) Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of their time and with the parent who is in receipt of child benefit.
- c) A looked after child has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 that is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making an application. A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. This will include children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.

Parents and carers of all applicants should be aware that Catholic rites and practices are a central part of the ethos of the school.

Children are expected to fully take part in the RE Curriculum, liturgy and acts of worship.

Applications for a Reception or KS1 Place at St Elphege's RC Infant School

Those with parental responsibility of children born between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022 must complete the Local Authority Common Application Form (CAF) and return it to Sutton Local Authority by 15th January 2026 for consideration for the September 2026 intake.

In addition to the Common Application Form (CAF) required by the Local Authority, we request that the Admissions Administration Form (available from the school and the school website), should be completed and sent to the school office no later than the national closing date for primary schools (15 January 2026). This should be done even if the CAF is completed online. You are advised to make two copies of the forms. You should retain one copy and pass the second copy to the school or your priest, as indicated.

If those with parental responsibility complete a Admissions Administration Form but do not name the school on Sutton's CAF, it will not be treated as a valid application.

Offers of places will be sent to parents by the home local authority on the common offer date.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admission of pupils with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with an EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 94 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel. Infant classes are restricted by legislation to 30 children. Parents should be aware that an appeal against refusal of a place in an infant class may only succeed if it can be demonstrated that:

- a) the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit;
- b) or, the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or had not been correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied;
- c) or, the panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

Admission of children below compulsory school age

The governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year; parents may also request that their child attends part- time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may also seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group in very exceptional circumstances, e.g., the child has experienced problems such as ill health or other significant experiences which have impacted their developmental trajectory. Requests must be made in writing to the school and will be considered in line with the following criteria, with the final decision being made by the head teacher:

- Is the pupil's development significantly below the expected level for their age range?
- Has the pupil experienced problems which have resulted in being out of education for a substantial period of time?

- Has the pupil previously been educated in a different year group from the normal one for their age up until that point?
- Is the pupil remarkably gifted and talented?
- Was the pupil born prematurely and would they have been admitted into the year 'below' if delivered on their due date?
- Is the pupil delayed emotionally and therefore cannot make adequate relationships with their peer group?

It will be important to substantiate a request for education outside of chronological age group with strong evidence. The following should be considered:

- Does the proposed action respond to the educational needs of the pupil based on available evidence?
- Has the proposal the strong support of all parties with a legitimate interest in the pupil's education, including the pupil?
- Has it been clearly demonstrated that the educational progress which could reasonably be expected of the pupil cannot be achieved by remaining with his or her normal age group by making reasonable adjustments?

Archdiocese of Southwark - Guidance on School Admissions Revised May 2023

Governors will make decisions on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

They will also take into account the views of the school's head teacher. When informing a parent of the decision which year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision. Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school, the local authority will process the application as part of the main admissions round (unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible), and on the basis of the determined admission arrangements, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

Waiting Lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained until at least 31st December of each school year of admissions.

The waiting list will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol, they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

Late Applications

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, in accordance with Sutton's coordinated scheme and, in the event of there being any available places, using the above criteria. If all places have been filled, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

This admissions procedure, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of entry to primary education (Year R), will also apply to succeeding years, and be subject to the availability of places.

Definitions

"Sibling" means a child who lives as brother and/or sister, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers and sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives e.g. cousins.

"Baptised Catholic Children" refers to children who have been Baptised or received into the Catholic Church and includes those who are members of the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the See of Rome.*

"Parental Responsibility" refers to a person who has all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his/her property. This may also apply to the Local Authority if a child is in statutory care.

****Eastern Catholic (or Oriental Rite) Churches in union with Rome. The Holy See's Annuario Pontificio gives the following list of Eastern Catholic Churches.***

1. Alexandrian liturgical tradition:

- Coptic Catholic Church (patriarchate)
- Eritrean Catholic Church (metropolia)
- Ethiopian Catholic Church (metropolia)

2. West Syrian, including Malankara, liturgical tradition (which is part of Antiochene Rite):

- Maronite Church (patriarchate)
 - Syriac Catholic Church (patriarchate)
 - Syro-Malankara Catholic Church (major archepiscopate)
3. Armenian liturgical tradition:
 - Armenian Catholic Church (patriarchate)
 4. Chaldean or East Syrian liturgical tradition:
 - Chaldean Catholic Church
 - Syro-Malabar Catholic Church (Major Archepiscopate)
 5. Constantinopolitan (Byzantine) liturgical tradition:
 - Albanian Catholic Church (apostolic administration)
 - Belarusian Catholic Church (no established hierarchy at present)
 - Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church (apostolic exarchate)
 - Byzantine Church of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro (an eparchy and an apostolic exarchate)
 5. Greek Byzantine Catholic Church (two apostolic exarchates)
 6. Hungarian Greek Catholic Church (an eparchy and an apostolic exarchate)
 7. Italo-Albanian Catholic Church (two eparchies and a territorial abbacy)
 8. Macedonian Catholic Church (an apostolic exarchate)
 9. Melkite Greek Catholic Church (patriarchate)
 10. Romanian Church United with Rome (major archiepiscopate)
 11. Russian Catholic Church (two apostolic exarchates, at present with no published hierarchs)
 12. Ruthenian Catholic Church (a sui juris metropolia, an eparchy & an apostolic exarchate)
 13. Slovak Catholic Church (metropolia and an eparchy)

NB: Eastern Orthodox Churches, including the Coptic Orthodox, Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox Churches are not in communion with the See of Rome

How will we use your information?

Our [Pupil Privacy Notice](#) and [Parent & Carer Privacy Notice](#) can be viewed by clicking the links. Alternatively, please navigate to the Policies section of the St Elphege's Schools Website: www.stelphegeschools.org.uk.